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REMARKS

In the office action mailed 05/22/2006, claims 2-5 were pending. The office action rejected claims 2-5 under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph as failing to comply with the enablement requirement. In particular, the Office action asserts that the specification does not disclose application programs as being write-enable or write-protected as claimed.

Accordingly, Applicants have canceled claims 2-5 and added claims 15-18. Figures 4 and 6A-B of the Application are reproduced below to illustrate aspects of claims 15-18 that overcome the rejections cited above and distinguish the art of record.

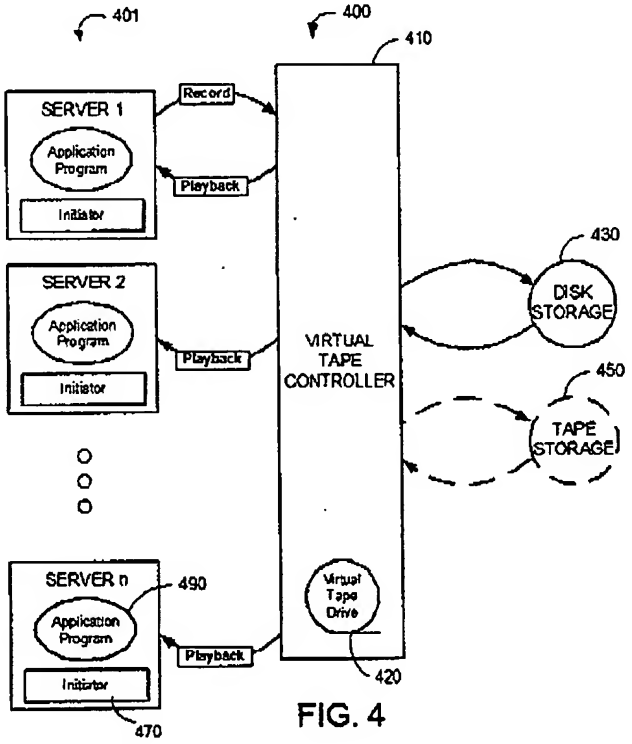

FIG. 4

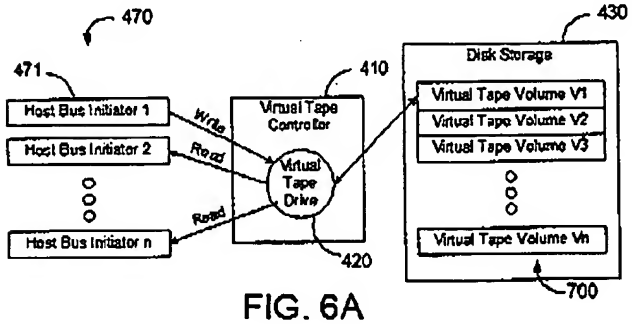

FIG. 6A

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As shown in FIGS. 4 and 6A, claim 15 cites:

> A multi-user virtual tape system comprising:
> at least one server 401;
> a plurality of application programs 490 residing on the at least one server;
> a plurality of host bus initiators 470 associated with the application programs;
> a random access storage device 430;
> a virtual tape controller 410 providing communications between the at least one server and the random access storage device and allowing the application programs access to the random access storage device as a sequential access tape storage device;
> a virtual tape volume 700 configured on the random access storage device for tape formatted data;
> a write-enabled one of the host bus initiators 471 designated to perform a record of tape formatted data to the virtual tape volume; and
> a write-protected at least one of the host bus initiators designated to perform a playback of tape formatted data from the virtual tape volume,
> wherein the virtual tape controller allows the playback to operate during the record.

Likewise the specification states with respect to FIG. 6A:

> [0027] . . . As shown in FIG. **6A**, a virtual tape controller **410** creates a single virtual tape drive **420** target that can be accessed by multiple host bus initiators **470** as if each initiator **470** has exclusive access to the virtual tape drive **420** target. Each initiator **470** and an associated application program **490** (FIG. **4**) operates the virtual tape drive **420** as if it was a single user tape drive independent of other initiators **470**.
> [0028] . . . Write operations can only be performed by one of the initiators **470** to a virtual tape drive **420**. The write enabled initiator **471** can be pre-designated or designated after a virtual tape volume **700** is mounted into a virtual tape drive **420**. The first initiator **470** to perform a write operation is set to be write enabled while all of the other initiators **470** are set to be write protected.

Emphasis added.

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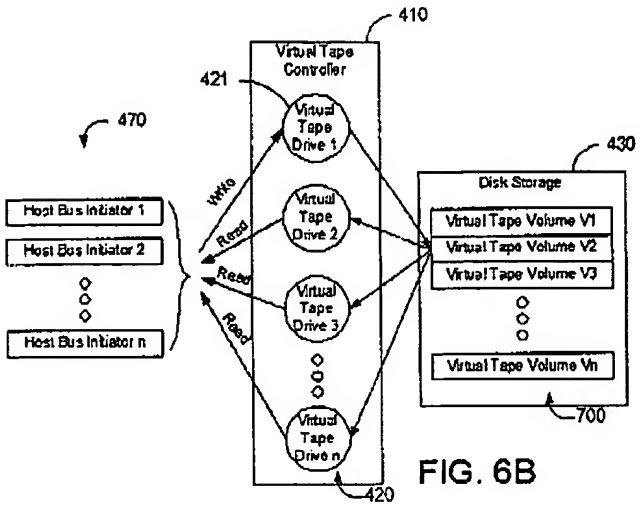

FIG. 6B

As shown in FIGS. 6A-B, claim 16 cites:

> The multi-user virtual tape system according to claim 15 further comprising:
> at least one virtual tape drive 420 defined by the virtual tape controller 410 and operated by at least one of the host bus initiators 470,
> wherein the virtual tape volume 700 is mounted in the at least one virtual tape drive, and
> wherein each of the host bus initiators has independent access to the virtual tape volume.

Further see the specification:

> [0029] As shown in FIG. **6B**, a virtual tape controller **410** creates multiple virtual tape drive **420** targets that each provide access to the same virtual tape volume data. The multi-user virtual tape drive **420** targets allow more than one instance of a single virtual tape volume **700** to coexist. Each virtual tape drive **420** and an associated application program **490** (FIG. 4) operates independent of other virtual tape drives **420**. The virtual tape controller **410** manages each virtual tape drive **420** independently. . . .
>
> [0030] Also shown in FIG. **6B**, only one of the virtual tape drives **420** is allowed to perform write operations. The write enabled virtual tape drive **420** can be pre-designated or designated after a virtual tape volume **700** is mounted into a virtual tape drive **420**.

Emphasis added. See also paragraphs 0027-0028 cited above.

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Claim 17 cites:

> The multi-user virtual tape system according to claim 16 further comprising:
> a first one of the host bus initiators having performed a write operation after the virtual tape volume is initially mounted in the at least one virtual tape drive,
> wherein the virtual tape controller designates the first one of the host bus initiators as the write-enabled one of the host bus initiators.

See paragraph 0028 cited above.

Claim 18 cites:

> A multi-user virtual tape system according to claim 17 wherein at least one the host bus initiators is able to perform one of a load operation and an unload operation on the virtual tape volume independent of others of the host bus initiators.

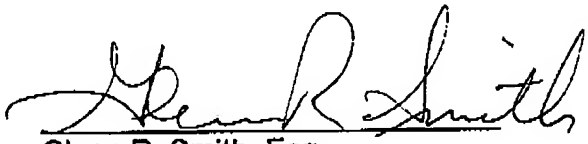
The specification states:

> [0037] . . . As described above, only one initiator (or virtual tape device target) can be write enabled at a time while all of the other initiators (or virtual tape device targets) are write protected. Thus, if the initiator (or virtual tape device target) is not write enabled **875**, a write operation is terminated with a check condition status due to a data protect error **880**. If the virtual tape volume for an initiator (or virtual tape device target) is unloaded, the other virtual tape drives continue to operate independently with uninterrupted access to the same virtual tape volume.

In light of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 15-18 are in condition for allowance. Applicant requests that this application be passed to issuance. If, however, the Examiner believes that any issue remains that requires clarification, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney of record at the number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

LAW OFFICE OF GLENN R. SMITH

Dated: 08/22/2006 By: 

Glenn R. Smith, Esq.
Registration No. 38,308
Attorney of Record
28626 Brookhill Road
Trabuco Canyon, CA 92679-1163
Telephone/Fax: (949) 709-7164

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